
The Causes and Cure of
PREJUDICE
A Symposium

HARRY ELMER BARNES
IRWIN EDMAN
WILLIAM BIDDLE

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

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SOURCES OF PREJUDICE

By HARRY ELMER BARNES

THE question of prejudice is one of the most complicated and comprehensive issues in the whole field of social science. Prejudices are due to the fact that man is a timid animal and also a lazy animal. His fear and indolence are the two outstanding causes of prejudice.

The first point I want to deal with relates to the general question of the origin of prejudice—how prejudices have appeared among mankind. I think the first and basic thing to note is what Professor Gidding used to call "the consciousness of kind." Back in his early books like *The Principles of Sociology* and *Introduction to Sociology* he laid very great stress on the automatic antipathy which man has to anything that is different, and the spontaneous cordiality which man has to anything that is similar. We tend to accept and get joy out of the things that are like us, that agree with us, and to be hostile to things which differ from us. I am not inclined to go as far as Professor Gidding did in making this a basis of a system of sociology. It is, however, important to keep in mind that spontaneously and without thought we tend to group ourselves with things and persons who are like unto ourselves, and to have an automatic, spontaneous hostility to biological differences and to cultural differences, like ideas, differences in beliefs, in interests, in habits, etc.

Another very significant cause arises in the nature of man in society—the origin of human group discipline. Man joined with others like himself in order to protect himself against both animal and human enemies. Man's gregariousness enabled him to exist. In order to have group life, we must have discipline. Nowadays we can make a sensible appeal and rationalize about mutual understanding in society; but not so in primitive times. Primitive man was a victim of the most diversified fears. Therefore in primitive ages there was no time to reason about things and no basis for that group discipline which is founded upon careful philosophic analysis and mutual understanding. Group discipline was based upon vigorous group rules, chiefly in the form of taboos against certain types of actions looked upon as dangerous.

From early times there existed a tremendous momentum in this herd impulse to shut off anything which diverged in any way from the prevailing, accepted group views. The rigorous enforcement of group discipline and the complete cutting off of any divergencies of opinion, or any questioning, during the war period in America,

existed universally in primitive society. Preservation of a very definite, single-track type of attitude towards every problem of life in order to live in the group and in order that the group itself might exist, is a powerful source of prejudice.

THEN we have a third very important basis for prejudice in man's relation to a supposed supernatural world. In primitive society man believed that everything that happened to him was a product of the spirit world; not only the universe was created by the gods, but all human experience was the outgrowth of the spirit world. Good crops, successful breeding of domestic animals, good hunting and fishing, meeting disease—all these things were believed by primitive man to be due to the intervention of supernatural powers. The group gods were looked upon as a highly local possession. The gods of another group were considered bogus.

Tremendous religious intolerance is explained by the fact that people actually believed that their very existence on this earth—and, in due time, when they got up to ideas of heaven and hell, that their very existence there—depended upon their being absolutely intolerant about religion. They rigorously insisted upon the sole efficacy of their own group gods worshipped in a completely uniform fashion. This view came right down into Orthodox Christianity and, perhaps to a lesser degree, into Orthodox Judaism. Just as long as people believe that their interests, both earthly and other-worldly, are linked up with an undeviating belief in a particular group of gods or a particular cult, just so long we are bound to have religious intolerance.

Another definite basis of prejudice is in the stratification of society. Early in human society you find the appearance of various classes along political lines: the hierarchy of leaders and their subordinates, the common people, and the slaves. This stratification of human society is not only political, but is also based on religious sanction. When this develops into a caste system of society, any thought of passing from one class to another is not only a blow at and a challenge to the political system but, also, is an affront to religion. This is the thing that the gods approve of. The gods as well as society stand behind this stratification of classes. So you have this inter-linking of political stratification with religious sanction.

The fact that man is a creature of habit and custom is a basis of prejudice. We are able to live primarily because, throughout history, mankind, reacting to the concrete facts and problems of life, built up accepted ways of doing things. We have accepted modes of doing things in the way of enforcing political rule, in the way of acquiring and holding and using property, in the way of per-

petuating the race through marriage, in the way of the education of children, in the way of perpetuating culture through group education. In practically every phase of life we built up accepted ways of doing things which we call custom, and these customary ways of doing things are for those who follow the customs the *right* way of doing things.

One of the most stimulating books on this subject is William Graham Sumner's *Folkways* showing how customs arise, and how customs make things right. What is *right* for each group in human society is what *exists*. Man's customary reactions to the problems of life are the things which give him his opinions of right and wrong. This makes life enormously easier than if each generation had to work out these accepted ways of doing things. These things are handed down from generation to generation. We grow up with them. It makes life easy and exceedingly simple.

But it also makes us very intolerant. Because we accept these customary ways of doing things, we are annoyed and irritated by anyone who suggests that there might be a different way of thinking about economics or politics or religion. So any suggestion of novelty or newness is annoying and irritating, because our customary ways of doing things appeal to man's laziness.

I should say that laziness as a source of prejudice comes in here chiefly. It is so easy to get along, continuing to go on with the routine ways of habit and custom, that we resent any suggestion which is going to turn us out of the rut of habit and custom and make us readjust our lives to a new mode of thinking, to a new mode of acting, to a new mode of conduct in general. General interest in the customary ways of doing things naturally turns man against any suggestion of novelty and makes him exceedingly intolerant of innovation.

Then along with this, and closely related to it, is the whole matter of etiquette and good taste. We have a very powerful basis of prejudice here. We build up in various groups, in various religious organizations, in various cultural associations, in various clubs, in professional life, and what not, certain codes of what it is right to do—what is ethical professionally, what is in good taste professionally, what is in good taste in the matter of dress, what is in good taste in the matter of behavior, what is in good taste in certain social situations.

About these things there is nothing absolute. In certain areas it is regarded in very good taste to have finger nails that are six inches long. In other areas it is regarded in very good taste to have finger nails closely manicured.

IN some areas it is looked upon as extremely good taste to wear rings in our noses. In other areas it is only good taste to wear rings on our fingers. The person who wears a ring in his nose may be in exemplary good taste and, likewise, the girl who wears a diamond solitaire engagement ring on her finger may be in very good taste. But the beautiful, young girl in America, with this diamond solitaire engagement ring on her finger, may consider the Hottentot woman wearing a ring through her nose in very bad taste; and the Hottentot woman, with the ring in her nose, may feel that the American girl, with the ring on her finger, is not in good taste. Taste has a powerful influence on our reaction to life.

A very cultured Southern gentleman coming up to New York and riding in one of our elevators in a building finds it a severe shock to see the men failing to take their hats off when a woman enters the elevator. On the other hand, many a sentimental Northerner, who has an abolitionist attitude towards the Negro, goes down South and sees Southern gentlemen herding Negroes into Jim Crow cars and off the sidewalks. He notes this incongruity between the very delicate and sensitive good taste of Southern gentlemen in one instance and their enforcement of this matter of racial subserviency upon the colored race in the South. It is entirely a matter of good taste.

Another very important basis of prejudice is what we might call self-esteem. The only way we can live with ourselves and maintain our poise and happiness is to feel that we are doing about the right thing, that we have got the right ideas about almost every phase of life, that our views on politics, on economics, on religion, on sex and on education are all correct, that our type of conduct is relatively immaculate. That is the sort of thing which is necessary in order to enable us to function with the maximum amount of efficiency and to live in the most happy and pleasant fashion. You have got to have a good opinion of yourself.

Well, our good opinion of ourself is based upon our complex of prejudices against those things which we believe not to be the right things. When somebody comes along and suggests that our ideals and our particular conduct in a given realm of endeavor are thoroughly open to criticism, that upsets us and destroys our self-esteem. It suggests that we are not perfect, and it enormously irritates us.

So we have here, then, a very powerful basis for wanting to hang on to our ideals; because the general complex of our notions (of our prejudices, in other words) which we have built up in our life rests upon the basis of custom and habit and our education. It is our conviction that these beliefs which we possess (our complex of prejudices) are perfect.

There is an important foundation of prejudice in geography—the fact of the nature of the geographic environment. Wherever we find a geographic habitat that tends to isolate people, to prevent them from coming into contact with others, we have a tremendous impetus to the growth of bias and prejudice and, also, an obstacle to the breaking-down of insularity and provincialism.

You find that situation among the mountaineers of Tennessee and Kentucky and various other areas. Of course, we found it very widespread in early society, where these difficulties of travel and of contact with other people were much more intensified. Wherever we find a geographic habitat that tends to shut people off, the inhabitants, of course, can't learn what other people are doing. They have to build up a local civilization, and they become more and more convinced that what they are doing is correct because they never have a chance of seeing anybody do anything that is different. So we find both the building up of a very intense prejudice and a very profound intolerance for people who think and act in a different fashion.

IN the field of education we have, likewise, a very potent source for the growth of prejudice coming even down to our own day. For example, we have our super-patriotic education—the notion that our country is always right, that our neighbors have always been wrong, that we have never fought a war of aggression, that we have always fought to defend ourselves from wrong, that we have always been the victor and that where we were ignominiously defeated we actually won. There is this whole prejudice of national superiority; and it is, I am sorry to say, more intense today than it has ever been in any other period of history with which I am familiar.

Just as long as we have that sort of education, we can have a million disarmament conferences and any number of Leagues of Nations and Kellogg Pacts and we will still have wars. Just as long as we bring up children to hate their neighbors and to believe that their country is superior to any other country and that it is always right and can never possibly be wrong, just so long we are bound to have wars and international hostility. There is no possibility of having peace as long as we think in terms of reactions and attitudes which are bound to provoke war.

Then we have these economic antipathies which are built up in our public schools. For example, in the American capitalist schools the attitude we have towards the communist represents the communist as being almost biologically different from the capitalist and a dangerous sort of animal. The best possible thing for one to do is to have lunch with some Wall Street banker and dinner with a communist, and see how much alike they are, after

all. At least they are members of the human race and in general have a great many common ideas.

On the other hand, in Bolshevik schools, we get an equally preposterous notion about the capitalist. The capitalist is pictured as an altogether hideous being. They deal just as severely with capitalists in the communist schools as the Chief of Police wishes to do with the communist children in New York City schools.

Instead of having the teachers try to find out what communism really is, its historic development, the reason why it has gained a good deal of headway in certain places, its excellencies and its defects—and, likewise, instead of the communist schools trying to find out what virtues there may be in capitalism—we have these violent prejudices. We simply assume, *a priori*, that communism or capitalism is one hundred per cent malicious. It is only through an attempt to understand these varying points of view, so that we may have tolerance towards them even though we may not agree with them, that we can make progress.

Take the matter of religious education. I do not refer to the advanced type of religious education based on scientific learning as taught in religious seminaries; but I mean sectarian education, Catholic education in parochial schools, some sectarian education of Protestants and of certain Orthodox Jews—in other words, any attempt to inculcate the old supernaturalism on a sectarian basis. This promotes a dual sort of prejudice. In the first place, it prejudices the adherents of supernatural religion against the beliefs of non-religious groups. It builds this antipathy between the religious and non-religious. And, still further, it builds up hatreds and suspicions between the various sects of the Christians, or between the Gentiles and the Jews, and what not.

So that education, even today, is a very powerful aid for the perpetuation of prejudice. We talk about the value of education and enlightenment as a means of getting away from prejudice, but we find the perpetuation, right down to the year 1930, of stereotyped, conventional education as a tremendous force for the continuation of prejudice and intolerance. I should say, by and large, that our American educational material and machinery today is far more effective in promoting intolerance and prejudice than it is in the way of promoting mutual understanding and good-will.

FINALLY, as a basis for the operation and activity of prejudice, I think I ought to refer to the findings of the newer physiology which, for the first time, has thoroughly enlightened us as to the reason for the intensity and spontaneous nature of the operation of these hatreds and prejudices. We often wondered how it was that people could get so terrifically irritated instantaneously—for

example, an Irishman at the sight of the Union Jack, or a southerner at the sight of a Negro in a pullman car, or a capitalist at the sight of the red flag. Why do they fly off balance so instantaneously, suddenly besieged almost, as it were, by a spasm of hatred and of hostility?

Well, that has been explained in recent years by the development of what we call endocrinology or the science of the glands of internal secretion. We have now come to understand that, whenever a man is faced by a situation that provokes either fear or anger in an intense way, he is able to react spontaneously in this very profound, emotional manner. When one of these situations provoking fear or anger confronts humanity as a stimulus, our endocrine glands get active and secrete a little bit of this powerful chemical into the blood stream, which gets into contact with the liver and secretes an additional amount of sugar into the blood, and our skin gets hard, our hair tends to stand on end, our blood gets ready to clot rapidly so we won't bleed to death in the event of a struggle. We get ready to fight or run with great vigor.

Endocrinology has explained why it is that these prejudices, which one would think required days or at least a few hours to develop, set us off immediately. We have these prejudices which function on a cultural level, but these prejudices emerge on a physiological level immediately when they operate as a direct stimulus. So something which in a cultural sense might be supposed to operate only after a considerable period of reflection is transformed into immediate physiological response through the influence of the glands of internal secretion.

That is one of the reasons why, of course, our prejudices and our hatreds are so dangerous, that we are likely to go off half-cocked, to act in an unthinking manner, to put our prejudices into immediate operation to the mutual disaster of ourselves and of those upon whom we vent our spleen.

EDUCATION AND UNDERSTANDING

By IRWIN EDMAN

WHEN I was first asked to offer my views on the subject of prejudice, I confess that I declined with reluctant emphasis on "absolutely." It occurred to me, on the spur of the moment, that the way to do anything about prejudice was not to cultivate it even by discussion; and I am afraid I was perhaps even a little bit ungracious about not wanting to commit myself at all on the subject of prejudice. But my ungraciousness, as a philosopher generally likes to allege, was based on philosophical grounds; and my grounds for my first antipathy to discussing this theme were the grounds, I think, that any mind or that any personality that looks rather toward creation than toward criticism, that is interested in construction rather than analysis, looks toward any negative theme.

As I began to reflect, however, aided by the kindly light and illumination of some things that Rev. Everett R. Clinchy pointed out to me, it occurred to me that there are certain things to be observed on the subject of prejudice that may be discussed not negatively but positively. I want to consider in this brief discourse, not the sources or the origins of prejudice, nor do I wish to bemoan prejudice, nor to give statistics on the subject. What I should like to indicate is how even in a world and in a society which happens to be afflicted with those provincialisms, cruelties, and bitternesses we call prejudice, we may look toward values and ends rather than toward origin and division.

CAN be more concrete now by a simple illustration. I was coming home from Europe last summer. Next to me in a deck-chair was lounging a very Olympian young man with a very Bostonian accent. I heard him say to his neighbor on the other side (he was too Olympian to talk to me), "And I said to President Lowell, 'How long will Harvard be fit for people of my class?'" And he added, reflectively, "That seemed quite a new idea to President Lowell."

Now, what we commonly call prejudice in this or in any other society may be summed up in the phrase, "How long will Harvard, how long will Broadway, how long will this country, how long will this club, how long will this refreshment counter, be fit for people of my class?"

And the reason, in general, that prejudice is

perpetuated is because all of us, even the victims of prejudice, tend to think of civilization, of culture, of the good life, in terms of some provincial, separated, single class in society.

Instead of doing that, we might take the attitude that has been most lucidly and eloquently stated by that very distinguished philosopher whom I have the honor to call my old teacher, Professor John Dewey. In *Democracy and Education* he points out that a genuine democracy, and therefore a genuine culture, would be one where all individuals of all groups contributed freely and received freely the peculiar value, essence, quality, contribution of every other individual and class in the community. Therefore, though I am not offering this as a cure, it seems to me a radical transformation in the whole situation with regard to various narrownesses, bitternesses, exclusions in this country. The whole situation would undergo a radical transformation if, early enough in education, we could teach people to realize that their own individuality was variegated, enriched and diversified by as many and as various contacts, with as many kinds, classes and cultures as they could be exposed to.

The reason people do not realize that is, on the whole, I think, because they make the mistake of looking for value in an origin instead of in a future; in asking, "Where does this person or idea come from?" instead of, "What is it good for?" or, "Where does it lead to?"

My Olympian young man on the steamer might well have reversed his question and said, "I asked President Lowell how long my class was going to be good for Harvard, or good for anything." Or, he might have raised a more fundamental question, with all due respect to Harvard: "How long is Harvard going to be good for anything; or, just what is it good for?"

This is not intended ironically; it is intended literally. That is, if you are going to examine the good of anything with respect to its future, with respect to its value or its possibility, then the notion of the very meaning of prejudice in your mind is bound to disappear. And it seems to me, the greatest transformation in the psychology of the general literate public with regard to prejudice as to a particular racial or cultural group in our society, whatever it happens to be, is that that attitude is being changed by the emphasis in the newer education on looking at things and at persons not in terms of their history but in terms of their possibility or their future.

When you begin to examine the logic of prejudice on this basis, it becomes so absurd that, in a sense, it may be said to laugh itself out of existence.

I often like to tell the story of the classic case of snobbishness and provincialism in my mind—the case of the prune pit and the banana peel who were rolling down the Mississippi River together. They got caught in an eddy. The prune pit and the banana peel began to whirl around. The prune pit said, very timidly and feebly, "Well, at this rate, we will never get to Memphis." And the banana peel completely ignored the prune pit. They got caught in another eddy, and the prune pit said, wistfully, "At this rate we will never get to Memphis." And, if you will pardon the vernacular, the banana peel drew itself up to its full height and said, "Where do you get this 'we' stuff?"

Now, from the point of view of the man from Mars, which is simply a picturesque name for the unprejudiced observer, any particular provincialism or prejudice seems exactly like the attitude of a banana peel expressing its superiority to a prune pit in an eddy on the Mississippi River. Even the eddy and the river, I think, are useful methods; because the thing that the unprejudiced observer discovers is that, ultimately speaking, we are all in the same boat, caught in the same human eddy; and each with our own accent, with our own point of view, may make our own peculiar contribution to progress.

I SHOULD like to correct one hope that Dr. Harry Elmer Barnes has expressed on this subject. Apparently, from Dr. Barnes' point of view, the ideal solution in this country for prejudice, for example, against Jews would be the assimilation of Jews by Christians, or *vice versa*. His ideal, as I have gathered from some of his writings, is an abolition in the interests of peace and mutual understanding of all differences in national characteristics, all differences in racial interests, emphases and ideals, until we all became bland, perfect, neutral, colorless, twentieth-century cosmopolitans.

I do not think that world will arrive before my lifetime is over, and I sincerely trust it will not; because, it seems to me, there is an illusion which the bitterness that results from prejudice promotes—the illusion that since groups, with their own cultures, loyalties and ideals, frequently become bitter and inimical to each other, that, therefore, it would be a better world if those group distinctions as well as those group prejudices were abolished.

To my mind, the issues are quite distinct. The kind of world that it is interesting to live in is a world where differences, national and cultural and racial, differences in mood, in accent and in temper do persist and make a various, a rich and an interesting society.

One of the reasons that a visiting foreigner

who, through the financial obligation of a lecture tour, say, is compelled to travel across the United States, is usually distressed by the country is not simply that he finds standardized food in all the hotels from New York to San Francisco, but he finds standardized people. He finds a type, a regimentation, a uniformity, a standard *bourgeoisie* brought up on the current Book-of-the-Month Club and the *Saturday Evening Post*.

One of the contrasting jars of Europe to America is that you cannot move six hours in Europe without coming across a difference in accent or atmosphere or life, whether it be merely the change in an accent, change in wine, change in food, change in the way of saying good-morning or good-night. It seems to me we should not assume that because a great many narrownesses and enmities are produced for economic and social reasons largely among different groups that, therefore, one should look forward to an obliteration of those human differences which make the contemporary scene, or any human scene, interesting.

The problem, therefore, would seem to me to be summed up in somewhat the following way: For a variety of reasons, which it is the business of a psychologist and a sociologist rather than for a philosopher (which I like to be) to go into, prejudices between different groups persist so that one group questions another group because of its history, because it is recent in our society, because it does not conform to our own special, traditional loyalty.

The way to overcome those prejudices seems to me to turn from history to value. I have often seen sitting next to me at the Symphony a certain dowager lady who, from her conversation, had immense prejudices against Jews. But, on two occasions, when Hebrew music was played, she evinced an immense prejudice for Hebrew music. If I could only have managed an introduction to her later, I would like to have pointed out to her that Hebrew music was produced by the Hebrew race and that even an elementary freshman in a logic course might make some connection between those two facts.

It occurs to me that if we began to look in any group for the characteristic values it produced, the meaning of prejudice would disappear; we should be looking for the contribution and estimating a group or an individual by that, and not measuring it by an *a priori* yardstick of conformity to our own childish fixations and genteel prejudices.

To take one illustration, not from a racial so much as a social cleavage, there is a literary and cultural vendetta on at present between a group of writers and thinkers who call themselves *humanists* and a group of people who call them something else. I am one of the people that call

them something else. And what I call them is "the English department mind."

Forgive the irony in that remark. Some of my best friends are English professors. But what I mean is that here is a group of writers and thinkers who criticise all contemporary culture and literature on the ground that it does not conform to certain standards of life, manners, gentility and culture that were current in Cambridge, Mass., in 1890. It appears to me, to judge literature by a set of *a priori*, purely social, almost purely etiquette standards, is a prejudice quite as violent and quite as illogical as the more melodramatic and simple instance of prejudice we commonly take. Develop the habit of thinking about life, about individuals and about groups in terms of their contribution, instead of in terms of their history or their past, or whether or not they differ from one's own group.

I was visiting a delightful English family once, the young man of which I had got to know in France. After a few days at this typical English house, the young man in question said to me, "There is one thing you want to know about this family to understand anything. My mother remarked after you were here a few days that you were quite nice, but frightfully foreign."

Well, what a great deal of prejudice really amounts to is that one group thinks another is "quite nice, but frightfully foreign." And the one way of curing prejudice is to examine the manner in which that foreign group is really quite nice and quite important.

PSYCHOLOGY OF PREJUDICE

By WILLIAM BIDDLE

“**M**Y BELIEFS are intelligent and true. The beliefs of my opponents are unreasonable and prejudiced.” Some such statement, either expressed or implied, is the commonly accepted definition of prejudice. In the effort to get away from this obviously ridiculous definition, prejudice has been described as any dislike or hate. We all have our dislikes or likes. We tend to find rational reasons to justify these choices. I may like Jews, but be unable to meet Negroes socially at all. I therefore seek reasons why Jews are to be accepted and Negroes condemned. We are led back to the point of condemning the beliefs and dislikes of others as prejudice. It is difficult to define prejudice from the point of view of any specific set of beliefs, or dislikes.

Yet prejudice is easily recognizable, even in ourselves. Certain earmarks characterize it, whether it be prejudice based upon intelligent truth, or quite irrational. The recognizable earmarks are psychological. Prejudice is an emotional condition. All people are prejudiced, some more than others. Prejudice may be positive, tending toward blind acceptance of something or somebody. It may be negative, tending toward condemnation of something or somebody. It is an emotional reaction, not based upon rational considerations. It tends to work for all of us, however intelligent we may be, outside the field of rational control. Prejudices are emotional responses conditioned, that is to say, attached by an automatic connection, to certain symbols, or objects. Most of us have a positive prejudiced response to the word or thought “mother.” The word or thought is enough to give an emotional feeling of warmth and acceptance. The word or thought “enemy” gives most of us a negative emotional feeling of hate, fear, desire for attack. In France, the word “German” has this effect, in Russia, the word “Capitalist” will carry the same emotional burden. In each case above, there is an immediate emotional response, a feeling which is attached or conditioned to the word or thought. If the individual pauses to think about the emotional-inspiring symbol, he tends to think of good reasons why he should feel as he does.

RECENT experimentation seems to indicate that there is a definite physical basis for the irrational emotional reaction we call prejudice.

The nervous system in human beings consists of two major parts. There is the central nervous system, consisting of brain and spinal cord, with connections to all muscles which are under conscious control. It is apparently with parts of this nervous system that we think and carry on our outward behavior. A second and more obscure part is known as the sympathetic nervous system. This system controls the automatic internal activity of the body, the digestion, heart-beat, flow of the blood, and the like. Most important for our purposes, it controls certain little organs, known as endocrine glands. All the functions of these glands are not as yet known. But this much is apparent, that by pouring certain chemicals which they manufacture into the blood stream, they control the automatic activity of the body. For instance, a pair of these glands pour on occasion a substance known as adrenalin into the blood. An excess of adrenalin in the blood prepares the body for battle or flight, it speeds up the heart, slows down the digestion, increases the amount of food in the blood, increases the ability of the blood to clot in case of a wound, and the like. A distinct emotion of anger or fear is the conscious part of this change, which follows the pouring out of adrenalin. The action of these glands, then, is controlled by the sympathetic nervous system. This system itself is divided into two opposed parts. One part tends to make the body function normally and pleasantly. It conduces to pleasant or positive emotions. The other part tends to upset the normal bodily functioning, producing negative emotions, such as anger or hate. This opposition is probably the basis for positive and negative emotions and for prejudices in favor of or against things or people.

The sympathetic nervous system which thus controls the automatic functions of the body, which apparently are the basis for emotions, is older than the central nervous system. In the history of the human race, man made an emotional adjustment to his environment long before he was capable of making an intelligent adjustment. These emotional reactions occur in our own day, in much the same automatic manner that they occurred in primitive man. Modern society seldom demands the automatic rapid responses of fighting or flight, which were necessary to the preservation of primitive man. Yet the responses persist. In primitive man, a painful blow brought about immediately the complicated internal adjustments preparatory for combat and made him feel angry. In modern man a blow in the face tends to produce the same result, even though a cool-headed response might prove more efficient. These adjustments tend in both primitive and modern man to become automatically attached or conditioned to certain symbols or situations. Primitive man was schooled

to fear and condemn customs that differed from those of his own tribe. Modern man is trained in patriotic education to hate and fear enemies which may attack his nation. In both cases, the conditioning is accomplished by an educational process which causes the sympathetic nervous system to respond automatically to the experience of "wrong customs" or "an enemy."

There is considerable evidence to indicate that the conditioned emotional response which we call prejudice is often built long before we are capable of an intelligent opinion on the subject. A child growing up in a home in the South tends to have a negative emotional reaction to Negroes, long before he is capable of an opinion as to their relative inferiority or superiority. A child less than a year old will sense an emotional situation. He will respond to a frown with a frown or with crying, and to a smile with a laugh. The evidence seems fairly clear that it is not imitation but that the child actually feels a certain emotion of fear or worry or joy which he has sensed in the social situation. A student in New York University is now working with four and five year old children, to discover what they think about such matters as the government, churches, the police, and the like. She finds that children this young already have clearly set opinions, largely emotional, of course. These emotional opinions are set before they can discuss the matters to form a rational opinion.

How then are these emotional conditionings set? They are set more by the general environment than by any specific teaching. A child who lives in a social group which looks down upon Negroes and treats them as inferior, becomes emotionally convinced that Negroes are inferior and must be kept in their place. Prejudice against non-Nordic races is more likely set by attitudes of fear or social disapproval toward Chinese, Indians, or Jews than by books "proving" the superiority of the Nordics. Emotions are not so readily set when the response is discussed as an intellectual problem.

Each of us arrives at adulthood with patterns of emotional responses and prejudices. Each of us is more or less consciously taking on the emotional prejudices of the groups with which we associate. There are certain patterns of emotional response which are common to a large majority of a nation. Emotional beliefs in the righteousness of one's religion, nation, and race, coupled with a condemnation of opposing religions, nations, and races, are common to practically the whole of a population. Certain people whose business it is to lead and regiment the public are well aware of these common prejudices. They, as propagandists, play upon these prejudices. They take a positive emotional response toward the thought of "mother" and use it to sell flowers, candy, and

telegrams on "Mothers' Day." They take the negative emotional response toward the idea "enemy" and fasten it upon the Germans, the Russians, the Japanese. There is a certain small minority of propaganda which is essentially an appeal to reason. But, by and large, the vast majority of propaganda, especially since the World War, is an attempt to condition emotional responses at the will of the manipulator of public opinion. This technique is well discussed in a recent book by E. L. Bernays, *Propaganda*. The total result of propaganda is to increase prejudice and the prejudicial type, that is the non-rational type of thinking.

IF ALL that has been said about prejudice is true, and the evidence seems fairly clear that it is, what can we do about prejudice? Are we condemned to one set of prejudices or another, depending upon the environment within which we have grown? May not prejudices be changed at all by an intellectual understanding of problems? Is it useless for us to hope that intelligence may some day triumph over prejudice in human society?

The situation is not as hopeless as present indications may make it seem. Education, in general, has tended to increase and set prejudice, not to destroy it. Any education which presents but one truth as true, but one ethic as right, while opposing ethics and truths exist, is a breeder of prejudice. When education can conceive its task to the creation of open minds, familiar with a variety of truths, encouraging students to discover the best truth for themselves, then education will tend away from prejudice. But, this is not enough. If our education is to wait until the child is capable of intellectual discussion, it will wait until after certain prejudices are already set. It is necessary, therefore, that early in his experience the child come in contact with emotional experiences in a variety of cultures, of races, of religions, of truths. A child should early meet as friends and equals, Negroes, Orientals, adherents of different religions, atheists, communists, capitalists. These people should early meet the child, not to attempt to persuade him, or make him precocious beyond his years, but merely to give him the emotional experience of a friendly contact with those who differ with the prejudices of his own environment. By learning that people who differ widely are human and sincere, by later courageously facing in discussion a great variety of truth, the child will probably tend to become less prejudiced, more rational and realistic in his thinking.

What can be done for adults who have passed through childhood and who have emerged with prejudices set? Is their lot hopeless? It must be admitted that it is difficult to reduce their preju-

dicial thinking. It is easy to shift the specific conditioning from one "enemy" to another. But to reduce the predilection to think of foreigners in terms of an "enemy" is not so easy. With adults this problem must be approached from the intellectual level. Once an adult is intellectually convinced that he desires to change his automatic emotional responses, once he is convinced sufficiently to persist in non-prejudicial behavior, the chances of his reducing his prejudice are good. A Christian who fears and condemns Jews, and can come to recognize that he is prejudiced and is willing to associate socially with members of that culture, will probably gradually lose his anti-Semitic bias. The difficulty of all adult prejudice lies in the fact that the holder of the prejudice is so seldom willing to recognize that his is prejudiced. Our greatest hope for achieving an intelligent race whose prejudices are reduced to a minimum lies in the education of the young.

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